



**Assistant Secretary Ann Stock's  
Message to Congratulate the Team Winners of the Alumni Engagement  
Innovation Fund (AEIF)**

Hi, I'm Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Congratulations to the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund winners.

And congratulations to everyone who made a proposal.

We see clearly that young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow—they are leaders of today.

Alumni around the world submitted close to 700 project ideas.

You joined together in teams. You crossed national and international boundaries. You thought long and hard about how to make things better for others.

As always, you have responded with enthusiasm and with thoughtfulness. So many alumni submitted proposals that our system almost crashed.

It's usually bad news when your system crashes. I think this was good news.

Winning projects were selected for their innovative ideas on how to come to grips with global issues that concern us all:

- democracy and human rights
- economic opportunity
- women's empowerment
- protecting the environment
- food security
- global health, and
- outreach to underserved communities.

The most exciting, and numerous, proposals came in the area of civil society and focused on ways that young people, in particular, could contribute.

People-to-people exchanges are absolutely vital to U.S. diplomacy. Few other experiences can substitute for seeing another country firsthand, learning more about its culture, and coming to know its people face-to-face.

Congratulations to everyone who participated in this competition. And my thanks to all exchange alumni from around the world and the United States for their service in advancing mutual understanding.

Please visit *alumni.state.gov* to follow the winning projects and be a part of this worldwide alumni effort.

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